

School Program Improvement Year One

SCHOOL CHOICE:

Title I schools that have not made AYP for two years in a row must offer public school choice, if a choice is available, beginning no later than the first day of school in the next year. The school, designated as a Title I School Improvement school, must then offer public school choice until it has made AYP for two years in a row.

All students who attend Title I School Improvement schools must be provided with an option, if available, to transfer to another public school not identified for School Improvement. Although all students from schools in School Improvement status are eligible, students who are the lowest performing and in the highest poverty have first priority when considering: 1) their first choice of school transfer options; and 2) who receives free transportation first, if demand exceeds the funding cap.

Districts determine which schools will comprise the public schools of choice. The schools of choice may not be Title I School Improvement schools. A minimum of two choices should be offered. Things to keep in mind in choosing the schools to be made available are proximity to the home school(s), transportation issues in the district, capacity of the receiving schools, and programs available for students.

Specific policies and procedures are set by individual school districts. Parents have a certain length of time from the date notified to decide whether to exercise the choice option(s). The school district looks at parent responses, determines final choice options and notifies parents. Parents then must communicate whether they accept the approved choice or want their child to remain at the original school. While the school district must take into account parental preferences, parents are not guaranteed their first choice of schools.

START WITH STAFF:

Send all communications to school staff first. Help staff understand what the test scores really mean, as well as what it means that your school did not make AYP and is identified as a Title I School Improvement school. Announce that planning for improvement will begin immediately and that everyone will be involved.

NOTIFY PARENTS:

Upon being identified for Program Improvement, a school principal should send a letter to parents, in a language they can understand, which should

Explain what being a Title I school in School Improvement means; If a Title I school does not make AYP in the same subject for two consecutive years, it must adopt two-year improvement plans, invest in professional development for teachers, and give parents the option to transfer their children to a school in the district that is not in Title I School Improvement (if possible), with the district paying for transportation. All students at Title I School Improvement schools offering choice are eligible for choice.

Share your data; Tell the story of where your school is successful and where it needs improvement. Identify how you're going to use AYP results to be even better. Point out that it is important to celebrate progress even if improvement is still needed.

Describe what will happen next; Tell what specific steps your school will take toward improving. This could involve new reading or math programs, more after-school assistance, new ways of teaching curricula, teacher training, scheduling changes, or increased small group learning depending on students' needs. It does not mean that drastic changes will be made without parents knowing about them and having a say.

Emphasize that there are two choices; The choices are to:

1. Remain at the school and participate in the school improvement process; or
2. Seek enrollment in a designated school, if available.

Point out that your school has developed a relationship with each child and that the school would like for its students to continue there, but that under federal law they may transfer, if a choice is available.

Explain the nuts and bolts of choice regarding priority for transfers, transfer process and timelines, and transportation. List the schools available for student transfers, along with a brief description of each. Enclose a form of your design for parents to use if they wish to request transfer for their student. List contact people in your school or district, in case parents have any questions about programs or the availability of services at the receiving schools. Don't forget to clearly state any deadline for application you have decided to set.

BEGIN PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

School Improvement plans and requested budgets are due at the USOE 90 days after a school is identified. The budget must have 10% of the school's Title I Allocation designated for professional development in the academic area of need.

School Program Improvement Year Two

CONTINUE TO OFFER SCHOOL CHOICE

CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Supplemental educational services –are extra academic services such as tutoring and other academic enrichment services offered outside of the regular school day, either on the school site or at another location. Districts are not required to provide transportation to and from service providers. Services focus on literacy and math skills, and content and hours vary by program funding and student needs. Title I schools must offer supplemental educational services the entire time they remain in Title I School Improvement, with the exception of the first year. Service providers are paid directly by the district from Federal Title I money designated for supplemental educational services.

Students are eligible if they receive free or reduced-cost school lunch and attend a Title I school that has not made Adequate Yearly Progress in the same subject for three or more years. Eligible students with disabilities and eligible limited English proficient students must be offered services, but the providers may differ so each student's needs are addressed.

NOTIFY PARENTS

Each year, school districts must notify parents of eligible students that free tutoring services are available, identify all state-approved area providers, and describe providers' services. Parents of eligible students should receive a notice regarding supplemental educational services following a Title I school's notification of its second year in Program Improvement. The notice should be easy to understand and, when possible, in a language the parents understand. The notice should include a list of the state-approved providers in the area and a description of their services. (A list of the state-approved providers is at www.schools.utah.gov/nclb/supplemental_services.htm. By clicking on a provider name, you will find a brief summary of their services and the areas they will serve.)

Parents of eligible students choose a provider from the state-approved list of providers that have stated they will serve your district. Parents may request assistance from their school district in selecting a provider, including identifying providers that can serve children with disabilities and with limited English proficiency. Parents may want to consider: where and when the provider offers services; how often and for how long students will be served; how students are grouped during tutoring; whether the provider can meet the academic needs of their child; tutors' qualifications; and how student progress will be measured.

Parents respond, within the timeline outlined in the notice, as to whether they are interested in receiving services for their child and indicate a service provider, if a choice is available. Parents may waive the right for their child to receive supplemental services. You may request that parents sign a waiver form stating that they decline the services on behalf of their child. When both school choice and supplemental services are available, parents may choose the transfer option or free tutoring services, but not both.

After parents indicate their choice of service provider, the district and school enter into an agreement with the service provider.

FUNDING

In most cases, service providers are paid directly by the school district. Districts must set aside an amount equal to 20 percent of Title I funds for public school choice transportation and/or supplemental educational services, unless a lesser amount is needed. Of the 20 percent, 5 percent must be for supplemental educational services and 5 percent for choice transportation. The remaining 10 percent can be divided among the two.

School districts are not required to provide transportation to or from supplemental educational services, although some do. Services may be provided in a student's school or at another location. If a school district pays for transportation to service providers, the transportation costs may not be used to satisfy federal minimum expenditure requirements. (See previous answer.)

If the demand for services exceeds funding, eligible students with the greatest academic need receive first priority. For example, the school district might focus services on the lowest-achieving eligible students in the subject area (reading or mathematics) that caused the school to be identified for Title I School Improvement.

Service providers are expected to offer services to students for a full school year, but fund sufficiency and the student's needs will affect the number of sessions per week and weeks per school year. Services are subject to availability when requested after the beginning of school.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

If a charter school receives Title I, Part A funds, and if it is identified for Title I School Improvement, then it follows the same guidelines and must provide free tutoring services to eligible students after the school has not made Adequate Yearly Progress in the same subject for three consecutive years.

CONTRACT WITH PROVIDERS

Once a parent selects a program or tutor, a contract is established between the school district and the selected provider that should include:

- A statement of achievement goals for the student;
- A description of how the student's progress will be measured that relates to the Utah Core Curriculum;
- A timetable for improving achievement that is consistent with the student's individualized education program (IEP) and/or personalized education plan;
- A description of how the provider will regularly communicate with the student's parents and teacher(s) regarding the student's progress;
- A description of the provider's plans to ensure adequate supervision of students at all times
- An agreement regarding provider use of school facilities (computer labs, classrooms, etc.)
- School district/provider payment provisions; and
- An assurance from the provider that prohibits disclosure of the student's identity without the written permission of the student's parents.

The school district's responsibility is to:

- Identify and notify parents of eligible students about the availability of services, at least annually;
- Help parents choose a provider, if requested;
- Determine which eligible students should receive services, if not all can be served;
- Develop an agreement between the district/school representative, the parent(s) and the service provider that outlines goals and criteria for student achievement;
- Assist the state in identifying potential providers;
- Provide the information the state needs to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the services offered by approved providers; and
- Protect the privacy of students eligible for, or receiving, services.

The provider's responsibility is to:

- Provide parents with information on the progress of their children;
- Ensure that instruction and content used are consistent with the school district standards and the Utah Core Curriculum;
- Complete USOE forms for reporting on the progress of all students served in the year;
- Meet all applicable federal, state and local health, safety, and civil rights laws;
- Ensure that all instruction and content are secular, neutral and non-ideological;
- Ensure all employees who interact with students have undergone background checks;
- Adhere to the agreement between the district/school representative, the parent(s) and the service provider that outlines goals and criteria for student achievement; and
- Protect the privacy of students eligible for, or receiving, supplemental educational services.

The responsibilities of parents/students are to:

- Choose a provider;
- Work with the provider to set achievement goals for the student;
- Support the student's work at home to meet the achievement goals;
- Participate in communication efforts with the teacher(s) and the provider;
- Provide transportation to and from provider services, unless the district provides transportation;
- Attend sessions regularly;
- When appropriate, express dissatisfaction with services to the district's Title I coordinator; and
- Protect the confidentiality of all students in the program.

